

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00268 101653Z

64

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-05 IO-10 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 INSE-00

NSAE-00 L-02 SP-02 A-01 PC-05 AID-05 VOE-00 DODE-00

INR-07 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SCA-01 PPTE-00 /063 W

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R 101600Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

SECSTATE WASHDC 4460

UNCLAS CAPE TOWN 0268

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, SF

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN VISA PROBLEM

REF: CAPE TOWN 242

1. IN CALL ON DEPUTY SECRETARY VAN DALSEN AT DEPT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DFA) IN PRETORIA MARCH 5, DCM WAS TOLD THAT INTERIOR DEPARTMENT HAD RECENTLY HAD MEETING ON VISA PROCEDURES AND DECIDED THAT LIMITATIONS ON LENGTH OF STAY WOULD NO LONGER BE STAMPED ON PASSPORT VISA AT TIME OF ISSUE BUT THAT LENGTH OF STAY FOR EACH ENTRY WOULD BE DETERMINED AT ENTRY POINT IN ACCORD WITH PURPOSE OF EACH TRAVELER'S VISIT. TRAVELER WISHING MAKE WEEKEND SHOPPING TRIP, FOR INSTANCE, MIGHT BE PERMITTED 72-HOUR STAY, WHILE TRAVELER PLANNING WEEK TOUR OF KRUGER GAME PARK WOULD GET LONGER PERIOD.

2. KFA SECY FOURIE TELEPHONED EMBASSY CAPE TOWN TODAY TO CONFIRM THAT DFA HAS RECEIVED ASSURANCE FROM INTERIOR THAT WHILE 72-HOUR STAY WAS PERIOD PERMITTED FOR GENERAL PURPOSES,
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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00268 101653Z

OFFICERS AT POSTS OF ENTRY FROM BLS COUNTRIES HAVE DISCRETION

TO ISSUE PERMITS FOR LONGER PERIODS AS REQUESTED AND NEEDED BY TRAVELERS, JUST AS IN CASES OF ENTRY AT AIRPORTS. HE ADDED THAT "IT SHOULD GO WITHOUT SAYING" THAT IF ANY INDIVIDUALS ABUSED ENTRY TO CARRY ON IMPROPER ACTIVITIES, THEIR PERMIT TO ENTER WOULD BE TERMINATED. HE CONCLUDED BY SUGGESTING THAT IF CASES AROSE ON WHICH THERE WAS NEED TO MAKE FURTHER QUERIES, EMBASSY COULD PURSUE MATTER AT SENIOR LEVEL WITH SECRETARY LINDEQUE OF INTERIOR.

3. WHILE IT MAY BE TOO OPTIMISTIC TO ASSUME VISA PROBLEM IS NECESSARILY SOLVED, BEST COURSE AT MOMENT IS TO MONITOR EXPERIENCE OF INDIVIDUAL TRAVELERS OVER NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS TO SEE HOW SYSTEM IS WORKING. HOLDERS OF ONE-YEAR MULTIPLE-ENTRY VISAS, EVEN WHERE VISAS APPEAR TO BE LIMITED TO 72 HOURS, SHOULD BE ABLE TO ENTER FOR WHATEVER REASONABLE PERIOD THEY DESIRE. TRAVELERS SHOULD BE ABLE AND PREPARED TO EXPLAIN AT PORT OF ENTRY JUST HOW LONG THEY WILL NEED FOR THAT PARTICULAR VISIT, E.G., 5 DAYS FOR SHOPPING OR VISITING FRIENDS IN JOHANNESBURG AREA, 8 DAYS TO VISIT KRUGER PARK, 2 WEEKS FOR VACATION TRIP ALONG SOUTHERN COAST, OR WHATEVER THEIR ACTUAL INTENDED PURPOSE AND LENGTH OF STAY ARE.

4. REQUEST POSTS CONTINUE KEEP PRETORIA/CAPE TOWN INFORMED OF ANY ENTRY DIFFICULTIES AMERICAN TRAVELERS EXPERIENCE. IF PROBLEMS DO ARISE, WE NEED FULLEST POSSIBLE DETAILS TO TAKE MATTER UP WITH SAG AND DETERMINE WHETHER PROBLEM IS TECHNICAL, BUREAUCRATIC, OR SOCIO-POLITICAL IN NATURE.
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